LA 2317
.P5 M3
Copy 1

MEMOIR

OF

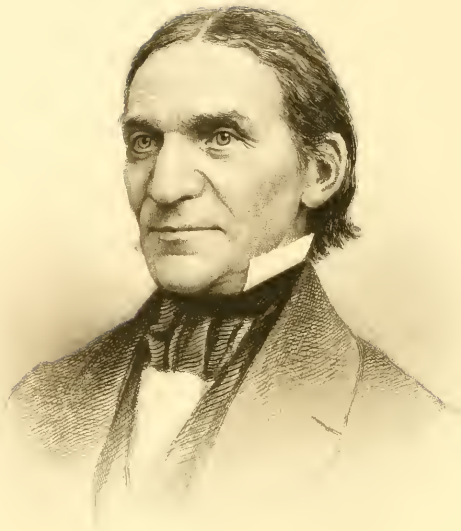
CYRUS PEIRCE,

FIRST PRINCIPAL OF THE FIRST STATE NORMAL SCHOOL
IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY REV. SAMUEL J. MAY.

REPRINTED FROM
BARNARD'S AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
FOR DECEMBER, 1857.

HARTFORD:—F. C. BROWNELL.



Yours truly,
C. Peirce

MEMOIR

OF

CYRUS PEIRCE,

FIRST PRINCIPAL OF FIRST STATE NORMAL SCHOOL
IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY REV. SAMUEL J. MAY.

REPRINTED FROM
BARNARD'S AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
FOR DECEMBER, 1857.

HARTFORD:—F. C. BROWNELL.

LA2317
.P5M3

The following Memoir of Cyrus Peirce, the first Principal of the first State Normal School in the United States, was prepared for Barnard's American Journal of Education at the request of the Editor, and is reprinted in pamphlet form for the gratification of the personal friends of Mr. Peirce, and the numerous graduates of the Institution which he organized and conducted.

I. MEMOIR OF CYRUS PEIRCE.

BY REV. SAMUEL J. MAY.

Cyrus Peirce, for fifty years a teacher in schools of different grades, and, for eight years, a "teacher of teachers," as the first Principal of the first Normal School in the United States, was born August 15th, 1790, in the town of Waltham, Massachusetts, the youngest of twelve children of the same parents. He spent his boyhood at home, on the retired farm, which his father and ancestors, for several generations before him, had cultivated. His physical constitution, hereditarily sound, was confirmed by the pure air, wholesome food, genial sights and sounds, early hours of retirement and rising, and by a due participation in the toils and the sports of country life. He enjoyed the good influences of a well-ordered family, and of a steady, judicious parental discipline.

At a very early age, he was sent to the district school, and went through the dull routine then usually pursued with little children. The only intimation we have been able to gather from his childhood, that was at all prognostic of his manhood, is that, when only five or six years of age, he thought his teacher was not judicious, was not teaching him as much as she should, nor giving her instructions in the best manner. He intimated that, at some future time, he should himself keep school, and then he would show how it ought to be done. Very probably, some impression, made upon his mind at that early day, did give the direction to his course in life.

Perceiving his inclination to thoughtfulness and study, his parents determined to give him a collegiate eduation. Accordingly he was sent to Framingham Academy, and afterward was placed under the tuition of Rev. Dr. Stearns, of Lincoln, at that time reputed to be a thorough scholar.

In 1806, Cyrus Peirce entered Harvard College. There he soon gained, and, to the end of his course, maintained the reputation of a pure, upright young man, a faithful, indefatigable student, and an accurate, though not a brilliant recitation, scholar. One of his classmates has favored me with the following account of him at that time:

The uniform success of Cyrus Peirce, in whatever he undertook, was owing to his singular fidelity and perseverance. No one could have been more faithful,

patient, persevering, than he was. Whatever the subject of study might be, his mind took hold of it with a tenacious grasp, and never let go, until he had reached a satisfactory result. In this particular, I have never known his equal. The action of his intellect was rather slow, but he investigated thoroughly and reasoned soundly. I therefore always considered his statement of facts, unquestionably true; and his opinions as entitled to especial regard. His very studious, as well as reserved habits, kept him much of the time in his room. At recitations, from which he was never absent, no one gave better evidence of a faithful attention to the exercises, in whatever department they might be. He always showed,* when "taken up," that he had "got the lesson." Yet, owing to his great modesty, his slow utterance, his entire lack of the faculty of "showing off," he did not pass for half his real worth as a scholar. He was thorough in whatever he undertook. He was inquisitive and candid. The exact truth was his object; and he patiently removed every obstacle in the way of his attaining what he sought.

During his Sophomore year, in the winter of 1807–8, Cyrus Peirce commenced his labors as a school-teacher, in the village of West Newton, the same town, and not far from the very spot, to which he came, nearly fifty years afterward, to close his career, and crown his brow with the last of those unfading laurels, which encircle it, in the eyes of all who have felt or seen his influence as a *Teacher of Teachers.*

In order to appreciate duly the value of his services, one must know what was the character of our common, especially our rural district schools, *fifty years ago.* Those who commenced their education since maps and globes were introduced; since the exclusive right of Dilworth's and Webster's Spelling Books, and Morse's Geography, and Dabol's Arithmetic, to the honor of text-books, was disputed; since blackboards were invented, or belts of black plastering, called blackboards, have come to be considered indispensable in our school-rooms; those who commenced their education since Josiah Holbrook's, and such like simple apparatus, intimated to teachers how much more intelligible and attractive, visible illustrations are than verbal descriptions,—how much more easily any thing which is understood is grasped by the mind, and held in the memory; especially those who have commenced their career since Warren Colburn made so plain, so self-evident, "the recondite powers and mysterious relations of numbers,"—showed how much of Arithmetic may be learnt from one's own fingers,—how many problems may be solved without having "learnt the rules,"—solved by the intuitive deductions of any mind that understands the premises; those who did not live until after Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, William Russell, William A. Alcott, Alonzo Potter, S. S. Randall, Samuel Lewis, Warren Burton, and their zealous fellow-laborers, had awakened the community throughout New England, New York, Ohio, to the consideration of

* Throughout his college course, he made himself master of every lesson but one, at the time; and that one he learnt afterward.

the inestimable importance of common schools; of the indispensable necessity of convenient, light, airy, warm, well-ventilated school-rooms, comfortable seats and desks, suitable text-books and blackboards, maps, globes, apparatus; and, more than all, well-prepared, skillful and amiable teachers; in short, those whose "school days" began within the last twenty-five years, can have little idea of the character of our common, especially our country district schools, at the time Cyrus Peirce commenced his labors.

Thanks to the gentleman last named in the above list of distinguished friends of education and school reformers, thanks to Mr. Warren Burton, there has been preserved a most truthful and graphic picture of "The District School as it was." In the volume bearing this title, written by Mr. Burton twenty-five years ago, he has given accurate, lively sketches of methods, scenes, and characters, that were common in the schools, as they were when he was a child, and not wholly extinct when he took his pen to delineate them. His book has been republished several times in this country, and once in England. It should never be out of print, nor be wanting in any of our public or private libraries, but kept at hand, that the children of this and coming generations may be informed, how many more, and how much greater, are the advantages provided for them, than were enjoyed by their parents and grand-parents, when young; so that they may be prompted to inquire who have been their benefactors, that they may do them honor. Then, I am sure, few will be found to deserve a higher place in their esteem, than the subject of this memoir.

Immediately on leaving college, in 1810, Mr. Peirce accepted an invitation, from an association of gentlemen at Nantucket, to take charge of a private school. He taught there two years very successfully, and gained the entire confidence and sincere respect of all who witnessed his impartial regard for those committed to his care, and his scrupulous fidelity to every duty he undertook to discharge. But at that time his heart was set on another profession. So, in 1812, he returned to Cambridge, to complete his preparation for the Christian ministry. For three years he prosecuted his theological studies, with an assiduity not surpassed, it is believed, by any one, who ever dwelt within the walls of Harvard. He seldom allowed himself more than four hours out of the twenty-four for sleep; and he preserved his health by strict attention to his diet and exercise. He never ate and drank merely to gratify his appetite, but to keep his body in the best condition to subserve the action of his mind. Every subject that came up for consideration, in the course prescribed, he studied until he was satisfied that he had arrived at *the truth*. Many of the dogmas

taught in the churches before that day, he was led to distrust; but he rejected nothing hastily. If he, like most other young men, could give no sufficient reason for the faith of his childhood, he dismissed nothing from his mind, which he had been taught to believe, until he could give a satisfactory reason for dismissing it. He was most scrupulously conscientious. He was severe in his demands upon himself; and, wherever truth and right were concerned, not indulgent to others. Yet am I assured by those who knew him best, that he was cheerful, amiable, tender in his sensibilities, and very companionable.

After three years thus spent in theological studies at Cambridge, Mr. Peirce was persuaded to return to Nantucket, and resume the work of a teacher. His former patrons had not found another, who could adequately fill his place. During his previous labors in their service, he had given them intimations of ability and skill in the work of teaching, which they were anxious to secure for the benefit of their children, even at a much greater cost.

Under this second engagement, Mr. Peirce continued at Nantucket three years, laboring as the teacher of a private school, with great success, and to the entire satisfaction of most of his pupils, and all of their parents. In 1818 he left, and commenced preaching.

Up to this period Mr. Peirce was not only strict in his government, but severe in his discipline. In the outset of his career, he very naturally resorted to those instrumentalities that had hitherto been most confidently relied on. Until after the first quarter of the present century, corporal punishments of children, by parents and schoolmasters, were matters of frequent occurrence. I could fill more than all the pages that will be occupied by this memoir, with narratives stored in my memory, or preserved in files of old newspapers, or in the Criminal Court Records, of cases of cruel chastisement of children,—girls as well as boys,—by ferules, rattans, cowhides, stocks, pillories, imprisonment, privation of food, and so forth. Little do they realize, who have been born within the last twenty-five years, how much they may have escaped of suffering, as well as of weariness at school; and how much they have gained from the greatly improved methods of teaching and governing, that have been devised since the commencement of that period. And it ought to be told them, that to no individual are they, and the coming generations, more indebted for these improvements than to Mr. Peirce. When he commenced the work of a schoolmaster, the idea of managing a school without corporal punishment had hardly dawned upon the mind of any one. On Nantucket especially, the people were familiar, in the whaling service, with severe bodily chastisements; and the proposal to manage "a

parcel of boys," without any thing of the sort, would have been deemed preposterous. It was reasonable and proper that the young pedagogue should begin with the regime then most approved. And it was natural for Cyrus Peirce to try faithfully what he tried at all. I can therefore believe that, in good faith, he did, when an inexperienced young man, inflict some chastisements that, at any time since 1830, he would utterly have condemned. It is not easy for those, who have only seen and enjoyed the excellent schools on Nantucket within the last twenty-five years, to conceive of them as they were in 1810, when Mr. Peirce first went there. His work was really that of a pioneer. If he did any good there, it was done by first establishing order, a regular and punctual attendance, prompt and exact obedience to rules, and faithful, hard study as *indispensable in a school.* If he effected this by means of severe appliances, uncalled for at the present day, when better views prevail, they were then so much matters of course, that most of his early pupils, from whom I have received letters, have not alluded to his severity as censurable. Indeed, only one has even mentioned it. They all bear witness to his exceeding strictness,—but only one tells me of any inflictions of severe bodily chastisements.

Mr. Peirce was careful to prescribe a reasonable task to his pupils, one that would try their powers, as he thought they ought to be tried in order to be improved; and then he was unyielding in his demand for the exact performance of it. Not partly right, but "wholly, precisely right," was what he always required. "Study enough will make a pupil master of any thing he is capable of learning," was one of his maxims. "Boys who can study, but will not study, must be made to study," was another. Order, "Heaven's first law," he deemed indispensable in a school; and he enforced it: he would have it. He excused no intentional deviation from it; even accidental violations were not readily deemed excusable. Carelessness was to be blamed, punished. His pupils were sent to him to be improved; to acquire valuable knowledge, and to form good habits, mental, moral, physical. He was determined their parents and the community should not be disappointed through any remissness of his; and that his pupils should not be allowed, for the sake of any present self-indulgence in idleness or fun, or through carelessness, to cheat themselves of that information, or of those excellencies of character, which they ought, in childhood and youth, to secure for the benefit of their whole lives, here and hereafter. He adopted, at first, the so-called "good, old method" of governing a school, and making boys obey and learn; the method, which, it was taken for granted in that day, Solomon meant to

commend, when he said, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." And in this, as in every thing else, "whatsoever his hands found to do, he did with his might." But corporal punishments were not then the characteristic of his school.

One of the contemporaries of the gentleman, who alone has made any mention of his severity, gives me the following account of the commencement of her acquaintance with Mr. Peirce:

It was in 1815, that myself and another girl, each under sixteen years of age, were wending our way to the academy, where Mr. Peirce presided, to become his pupils. We had conceived a strong prejudice against the man, expecting to find him an austere, hard master, rigid and exacting; who would not be satisfied with our best efforts, and would be unmerciful to our failings. Under this strange, very wrong impression, we strengthened each other, as we went; and met him well braced,—resolutely determined, if he did not suit us much better than we expected, that we would leave his school, and that too, speedily.

In the course of that memorable forenoon, he questioned his new pupil upon the branches of learning in which she presumed herself to be quite a proficient; and, without intimating that he meant to do so, made her fully sensible of her ignorance. Coming, last, to the subject of grammar, and finding her deficient in that also, he gave her to parse the following sentence,—"What I know not, teach thou me." She took the hint. She appreciated the delicacy, and began to love the man, whom a few hours before she expected to hate; and to reverence one, "whose small head could carry all he knew." My correspondent adds:

I shall always look back to the time passed in Mr. Peirce's school, as one of the best and happiest periods of my life. He inspired me with new views, new motives, a new thirst for knowledge; in short, he opened an almost new terrestrial world to me; and, over and above all, he was the one who awoke in my mind a deep interest in religion. Exact, cheerful obedience to all the laws of God, he made appear to me a most reasonable service. My understanding was convinced, my feelings were enlisted, and, by judicious management and careful nurture, he led me onward and upward, until I sincerely think, I obtained, through his ministration, "that hope which is an anchor to the soul, based upon the rock of ages." I shall, therefore, always love and respect Cyrus Peirce, as my spiritual guide and father.

Very similar to the above are the testimonies that have been given me, in letters or orally, by hundreds of the pupils of Mr. Peirce, from the beginning to the end of his career. He kindly, yet effectually made them sensible of their ignorance, and of their moral deficiencies. He satisfied them of his ability to teach them more than they knew, and to lead them in the way to eternal life. He prescribed to them tasks that they were able to perform; he gave them rules of moral conduct, to which it was right that they should conform themselves; and he never remitted any of his demands. He held them steadfastly to the exactly true and right. Precision was the characteristic of all his dealings, and all his requirements. His methods of inducing

his pupils to study, to get their lessons and recite them well, changed as he grew wiser by experience, and learnt more of the nature of the human mind and heart. But the object he aimed at, and the spirit that animated him, were the same, from the beginning.

About a year after his return to Nantucket, Mr. Peirce married Miss Harriet Coffin, of that place. She had been for several months one of his most distinguished pupils; and everywhere, ever since, she has been his most intelligent, devoted, effective helpmeet. He could hardly have accomplished all he has, in the cause of education, if he had not been blessed with such a wife.

In 1818, as has been already stated, Mr. Peirce left Nantucket and commenced preaching. In the course of the following year, he was ordained and settled as the minister of a church, in the town of North Reading, Massachusetts.

Eight years he lived there, faithfully discharging all his parochial and social duties. He was universally acknowledged to be a man of singular integrity and purity of life. His preaching was sensible, earnest and direct. As in the school-room, so in the pulpit, his main object was the discovery and the inculcation of the truth. He would tolerate no violation of it in word or deed. He dwelt less upon the dogmas of his sect than upon the precepts of Christ and his Apostles; always holding up the life and death—the character of Jesus—as the illustration of that godliness to which all men ought to aspire.

Mr. Peirce saw, and did not fail to show, how far the men of his generation, even the most zealously professing Christians, fell short of the stature of Christ. He deeply felt the need of reform, and that it should begin in the so-called house of God. He was among the first to embrace the opinions of the apostolic Worcester, respecting the custom of war; and he assiduously inculcated the pacific spirit of the Gospel, which has been quenched by the ambition of Christian nations.

So, also, the cause of Temperance, the principle of *total abstinence* from intoxicating drinks, is indebted to him, as one among its earliest, most consistent advocates. He was in advance of his generation, and therefore shared somewhat in the unpopularity, the obloquy, the hardships of the pioneers in the moral world. Not being an easy, attractive public speaker, those who were annoyed by his uncompromising demands of personal conformity to the example of Christ, could the more easily divert from him the attention of many, whom he longed to benefit. He came to feel, as very many faithful preachers have been made to feel, that he was spending his time and strength to too little purpose. He suspected that he was not called to preach, so

much as to teach. Yet more was he persuaded that it would be easier to prevent the children from becoming vicious, than he had found it to reform those who had contracted bad habits of action or thought. These considerations, operating together with some theological disagreements between himself and a portion of the people, magnified, if not aggravated, by the heated controversies which were so rife in that day, brought him to the determination to relinquish his ministerial profession. At the expiration of eight years, therefore, he resigned his charge in North Reading, and returned to "school keeping," as that which should thenceforward be the business of his life.

He was earnestly solicited to return again to Nantucket, and resume his labors there. But he was induced rather to unite with a relative, Mr. Simeon Putnam, in the conduct of a school at North Andover. His views of the true methods of teaching, and still more of governing pupils, had undergone some essential changes during the eight years of his retirement, owing to the observations he was continually making, all that while, as a diligent supervisor of the schools in Reading. But his colleague adhered to the old methods and appliances. Their discordance on these and other points was embarrassing to them both. Therefore, after four years of arduous toil at North Andover, he listened to the repeated and earnest solicitations of those who had appreciated his former labors on Nantucket, and, in 1831, removed once more to that island. I can not express the very high esteem generally entertained for Mr. Peirce, throughout that community, better than in the words, which I am permitted to quote from a gentleman of great respectability, and long official standing. "There has been no period," said he to Mr. Peirce, in 1830, "since you left the island in 1812, when you could not have had a school here, of any number of pupils that you would have undertaken to teach, and at any price you would have thought it fair to charge."

This was not the exaggeration of a friend. His return was most cordially welcomed. He immediately found himself at the head of a large and lucrative school, in the instruction and management of which, for more than six years, he was every way eminently successful. During the whole of that period, he scarcely ever found it necessary to apply corporal punishment of any kind. He had come to regard it as the "last resort," and a very sad one, arguing some deficiency of the requisite qualifications in the teacher, as well as uncommon perversity in the pupil. He relied upon other means, higher persuasions, moral influences. How sincerely he was respected and loved by his pupils of that period, the best of them, if not all, may be inferred

from the following extract from a letter I have received from a gentleman, now at the head of a most beneficent educational institution in Massachusetts:

It is twenty-three or four years since I was one of Mr. Peirce's pupils, on Nantucket. His name has ever been, and ever will be, fragrant in my recollection. His was the first school that I really loved to attend; and he was the first teacher for whom I felt a positive affection. * * * Mr. Peirce was eminently successful in discovering whether a pupil comprehended what he was endeavoring to learn, or the language of the lesson he was reciting. Under his method of teaching, I first began to understand what I was about at school. He would not allow us to conceal our ignorance, or seem to know what we did not. He would probe us through and through, and expose our superficialness. Because I began to understand my text-books, I began to feel the exhilarating love of learning for its own sake. I had been to school all my days before; but it had been, until then, a mechanical work to me. I can distinctly recollect this blessed change in my mental condition. It was a new birth. A dispensation of intellectual and moral life and light came upon me. Mr. Peirce seemed to me to *see through* a boy,—to read his thoughts,—to divine his motives. No one could deceive him; and it always seemed exceedingly foolish, as well as mean, to attempt to deceive him, because he was so evidently the best friend of us all. I can see him now,—moving rapidly but without noise about the school-room, always alive to the highest good of every one; quickening our pulses, every time he approached us, by some word of encouragement; inspiring us with the determination necessary to attain the object at which he pointed.

Mr. Peirce was very skillful in discovering the mental aptitudes of a pupil, and drawing him out in the direction in which he was most likely to attain excellence; thus exhibiting a boy's powers to himself, making him conscious of the ability to be somebody, and do something. I can not give you particular examples, nor narrate to you any single events in the history of that part of my life, which was blessed by his direct influence. The hours I passed in his school-room at Nantucket are the sunniest in the memory of my school days. But the elements entering into the enjoyment and profit of those days, blend together in my memory, and lose their distinctness, as the colors of the rainbow shade into each other.

This most excellent private school Mr. Peirce continued to teach for six years; assisted at first by his admirable wife, and afterward by others, whom he had likewise educated and trained for the work of teaching. It is said of General Washington, that "he evinced his wisdom and skill not more in what he did himself, than in his selection of those, to whom he committed the execution of any important duty." A similar praise is due to Mr. Peirce. He never would employ an assistant, whom he did not know to be thoroughly competent and heartily disposed to teach well. "No man," he would say, "can shift off any of his responsibility. A teacher is bound to make it sure, that all the instruction given in his school shall be thorough, exact: 'Qui facit per alium facit per se,'" and he would do all the teaching himself, unless he could find others, who would do a part of his work as well as, or better than, himself. He was, therefore, always blessed with able assistants, when he had any. Among those who aided him, at the time of which I am now writing, was Miss Maria Mitchell, who had been his pupil, and who has since attained a world-wide fame as an astronomer.

All the while Mr. Peirce was conducting so beneficently and acceptably this private school, he was exerting himself assiduously to effect the better organization and appointment of the public schools of Nantucket. Indeed he was alive to all the true interests of the community, in which he then intended to spend the residue of his earthly life. He suggested, or promptly encouraged and generously assisted, various plans of social improvement. He took so active a part in the temperance reform, as to incur the charge of fanaticism. Intemperance was then a very prevalent vice upon the island. Some use of intoxicating drinks was assumed there, as everywhere else, in that day, to be a necessity; and it was claimed that even a pretty free use of it should be readily excused in those who were exposed to the hardships and ennui of long whaling voyages. Mr. Peirce was among the first to discover the utter delusion, that had got possession of the people, respecting the use of ardent spirits. He satisfied himself that alcohol, in whatever form it might be disguised, contained no nutritious qualities, imparted no enduring strength, but only stimulated those who drank it to undue and therefore injurious efforts, which impaired their vital energy. He therefore espoused the principle of *total abstinence;* and not only commended it by his example, but urged it with great earnestness upon all, in private conversations and in public speeches. On one occasion, in a very large meeting, surrounded by his fellow-townsmen, most of whom had been addicted to the use of ardent spirits more or less, some of them excessively, Mr. Peirce exposed, with the utmost plainness, the evils they had brought, and were then bringing upon themselves and their dependents, by that indulgence; and then declared that so deplorable were the effects produced everywhere throughout that community, and the country, by spirituous liquors, that he could and would no longer give his countenance to the use of them in *any* measure, on *any* occasion, for *any* purpose. "No," said he, with an emphasis and solemnity that made his audience tremble, "if my life could be saved by no other instrumentality than that of spirituous liquor, I would forego it and die, in testimony of my dread and abhorrence of this enemy of the health, peace, and virtue of mankind." This was the noble, the holy spirit, which animated the Apostle Paul in regard to the same vice. Some scouted, mocked him as a fanatic; but others were deeply impressed, lastingly effected by his words and his example.

Mr. Peirce, however, was known and made himself felt on the subject of education, more than on any other. He had come to be *an authority*, on all questions pertaining to schools. In pursuance of his urgent advice, in accordance with a plan devised mainly by him, at

length the public schools of Nantucket were so arranged, in relation to one another, that all the benefits of classification could be secured in them. Primary, Intermediate, Grammar, and a High School constituted the series.

So soon as the arrangement was completed, and the committee and people looked about for the man fitted to fill the highest post,—to cap the climax of their new system,—the eyes of all turned, with one accord, to Cyrus Peirce, as the only one to be found, on whom they could rely to make sure the success of their great experiment. Without much hesitation, though at a considerable sacrifice, Mr. Peirce relinquished his private school, which was much more lucrative and less laborious, and became, in 1837, the Principal of the Nantucket High School. It was to be made what it ought to be,—the first best of the series, and a model of its kind. In no respect was it a failure. It was indeed an eminent success. From his high position, he shed down his influence upon all the schools on the island. He infused into most of the teachers much of his own spirit. And the common schools of Nantucket have, ever since, been distinguished among the best in our country.

A few passages from a very valuable address, delivered by him, December 15th, 1837, will show what was Mr. Peirce's *ideal* of education; and what pains he thought should be taken, and what expenditures incurred, by parents and by the State, to secure this greatest blessing to all the children of men:

Education is the development of all man's powers—physical, intellectual, and moral. It is the *drawing out* of them all in their just harmony and proportion. It regards the material frame, by which the mind manifests its operations. It is the formation of character, the discipline of the intellect, and the building up of moral principle, and moral power. Its aim should be to enable man to know, to do, to enjoy and to be, all that his Creator intended he should know and do, enjoy and be. The more nearly it approaches this point, the more nearly it will fulfill its appropriate office; and, when it shall have reached this goal, man will stand forth again, as at first, the image of his Maker. * * * If such is the object, and such the power of education, it should be regarded as the proper business,—the greatest end of life,—rather than as a *means* to something higher and better. It should fill a large place in the eye of the patriot, the code of the legislator, and the heart of the parent, from neither of whom has it yet received one half of its due consideration. * * * With all parents there rests an incalculable responsibility in this respect. It is time they knew, and felt it too, that they are, without their own choice, their children's educators; their own house is a school room. * * * Provision for *public* instruction—the instruction of all the children in the community—is the unquestionable interest and duty of every wise government; for the primary object of all wise governments should be to increase the happiness of the people. And the highest quality of human happiness is that derived from exalting the intellect and purifying the heart; to the end that men may aim at objects worthy of their ambition, and their social intercourse be regulated with all the satisfaction of mutual love, honor and trust. * * * The *moral* powers of man are his glory. They ally him to natures angelic. How, then, can that education be regarded as complete, which passes over the moral sentiments? These, like the physical and intellectual faculties, can be perfected and made to answer their full purpose, only by training and exercise. What an

anomaly is that school in which moral cultivation finds no place! We have defended schools, on the ground of public and private *utility*—as the palladium of social virtue and civil liberty. Now the prosperity of a community is far more dependent on sound moral sentiment, than on a high state of intellectual refinement. Nothing is more true than that men may be great and learned, without being good and useful. Men of high intellectual endowments, but destitute of moral principle, are far from being the best materials to compose society. We want great men, we want learned men, but much more do we want *good* men. On these must the community rely to carry forward the great work of human improvement. * * * How often has individual genius, that seemed angel-like in the loftiness of its aspirations, bowed before mean temptations, which timely discipline would have enabled it to withstand! Our own nation, though young, has more than once been seen to tremble on the verge of ruin; but, it is worthy of remark, that such a crisis in no instance has been the result of *ignorance*, but of the destitution of moral principle. If our union and liberties are ever shipwrecked, this is the rock on which they will split. We shall always have enough *great* men; the only danger is, that there will not be enough *good* men,—men of disciplined passions, nice moral discrimination and active benevolence. * * * A cultivated intellect, cast upon society, uncontrolled and unsanctified by moral sentiments, is but the scattering of arrows, fire-brands and death. Therefore the education of *the moral sentiments* should be a primary object with all, who have any thing to do with instruction. If children are taught but *one* thing, whether at home or at school, let it be—their *duty*. Let it be love of truth, sobriety, temperance, order, justice, and humanity. If you make them any thing, make them *good*. * * * It is a fact, which does not speak to our praise, that almost every class-book adopted into our schools is prepared to teach how to read, or get, or calculate; to teach mere sciences, as though these were the great objects of life. Let something more be put into the hands of children, to teach them how to *feel*, to *act*, to *live*. * * * Health stands among the first of blessings. Children would do well to learn something of the structure, laws and economy of their own material frame; what food, habits, attitudes, exercises and modes of living, are consistent with, opposed to, or promotive of health. What an incalculable benefit might thus be rendered to children, by making them early the intelligent guardians of a trust, to them of inestimable value! Would it not be doing them quite as great a service to demonstrate the natural consequences of inaction, over-action, tight lacing, exposure, excess, or licentiousness,—to teach them what are healthy attitudes and healthy diets,—how they may avoid a headache, a fever, or a consumption, as to teach them the solution of a difficult problem in algebra, or keep them eternally casting per centage? As connected with the subject of health, as well as for the reason of affording to children the means of suitable amusement and exercise, every school should be furnished with some simple apparatus for gymnastic purposes. Such provision might indeed be made auxiliary to good manners and morals, as well as to sound health. * * * Why should not the rising generation be regarded as a public trust, and their education be sustained at the public charge? Nothing exerts so great an influence on the character of the present and the coming age; nothing on public and private virtue and happiness; nothing on the prosperity and perpetuity of our institutions. Nothing can better subserve the interests of liberty and the equalization of rights; nothing will better enable the poor and the middling interest to make an effectual stand against the encroachments of power, of wealth and of title; or the friends of order and law to frustrate the designs of the intriguing demagogue, or restrain the outbreakings of popular phrenzy, than *sound education*. Here, here, fellow-citizens, is the palladium of your liberties,—of all that is valuable in the social fabric. It is not only connected therewith, but constitutes its *very life*. Why then should not the public assume the education of the child? * * * Then every class of citizens, and every individual, would feel a direct and immediate interest and concern in the public schools; and these would rise to an elevation of character, which has yet hardly been reached by our best private establishments. Our children would be educated together, without distinction of rank; and this, if it has no other recommendation, would certainly better comport with our republican habits and institutions. * * * If the children of the affluent go to one school, and the children of mechanics and the poor to another, will not the tendency be to keep up a distinction of ranks in society? * * * To have good

schools, we must have good *teachers*,—teachers of the right temper and disposition, and of the proper scholastic attainments. * * * Where shall we get them? How and where shall they be qualified? * * * Would it be any thing more than a consistent carrying out and completion of the school system already begun,—yea, would it exceed the limits of a judicious economy, to appropriate funds for establishing *seminaries*, in which teachers, themselves, may be taught *how to teach*. * * * This, it seems to us, more than any thing, our schools need; and this the community should demand.

Quickened by the spirit and guided by the principles of this excellent address, the people of Nantucket were led to make many improvements in their system of free schools. They enlarged the number of them, and graduated them in relation to each other, from the Primary to the High School; introduced improved desks and seats, effective ventilators, better text-books, and took greater pains to secure the services of well-qualified teachers. The private schools were, to a considerable extent, relinquished; and the children of all classes came together, as they were able, to enjoy alike the common bounty,—of all classes except that which had always been subjected to the greatest disadvantages, and therefore needed assistance and encouragement the most. The *colored* inhabitants of the town were not allowed to send their children into the public Grammar Schools; but a provision was made to educate them by themselves. Against this decision, Mr. Peirce remonstrated and contended, with his wonted earnestness and determination. But the "prejudice against color" was too mighty for his appeals to prevail. He left his protest against this wrong. It will be preserved; and, in some future day, it will be read with greater admiration than it would awaken now.

The address, from which we have just made liberal extracts, could not escape the vigilant notice of those wise and earnest philanthropists, who, at that time, were most intent upon the improvement of our system of public instruction. In 1837, the Hon. Horace Mann, (whose acceptance of the secretaryship of the then newly-created Board of Education in Massachusetts, was an era in the progress of Christian civilization,) visited Nantucket in the course of his thorough investigations into the condition of the common schools of the state. He found on that island the man who could construct, manage, and teach a school, better even than he could tell how it ought to be done. Mr. Peirce's school appeared to Mr. Mann an approach to his own high ideal of what a seminary for the education of the young should be. He clothed his appreciation of its excellencies in a nautical figure, pertinent to the place and the community in which he found it. "That school," said he—we quote from the memory of another—"that school is as much superior to schools in general as a strongly-built, well-equipped, ably-managed steamboat, propelled by a powerful engine, within itself competent to 'keep its head,' let the

winds blow and the waves roll as they may, is superior to a ship, that must shift its sails to suit every breeze, and furl them when it storms, and that is withal unseaworthy, leaking at many a seam, poorly manned, and commanded by a captain who does not understand navigation."

Mr. Peirce kept the Nantucket High School nearly two years. It comprised between fifty and sixty pupils of both sexes, and of the usual variety of ages and characters. He succeeded, however, in establishing and preserving uncommonly good order; in securing remarkable regularity and punctuality in the attendance of his pupils; and induced them to be diligent and faithful in their studies, and to make improvement in all respects greater than ever before. And yet he struck not one blow, nor inflicted any other corporal punishment.

The friends of the new system were more than satisfied. The opposers were silenced. It was made apparent to all, that public schools of every grade, having boys and girls together, if well classed, as they may be where there is a proper series, furnished with suitable rooms, text-books and apparatus, and committed to the management of competent teachers, may be conducted with exemplary order, and be led to make greater progress than common, in all the learning taught in our schools, without any inflictions of bodily suffering, or the stimulus of any other emulation than that which will be naturally awakened, wherever numbers are brought together to pursue the same high object. Excellence, in whatever they undertook to learn or to do, excellence was always kept before Mr. Peirce's pupils, as the mark to which they should aspire,—excellence, rather than to excel a competitor. Thoroughness, exactness, fidelity in all things, intelligence in every exercise, and an exalted tone of moral sentiments, were the admirable characteristics acknowledged to be conspicuous in Mr. Peirce's school.

These were precisely the excellencies which ought to be conspicuous in every school; but they must be extant in the teacher, or they can not be infused into pupils. Therefore, to unfold these excellencies, if possible, in all who would be teachers of the young, had come to be regarded by the enlightened friends of education as the greatest desideratum; and, to keep the schools out of the hands of those who were devoid of these excellencies was felt to be a necessary precaution. Mr. Mann and his co-laborers had been brought to the conclusion, that seminaries, especially for the training of teachers, must be established. And they were confident that Mr. Peirce was the man who could show what a normal school should be.

When, therefore, the munificence of the late Hon. Edmund Dwight

induced the legislature of Massachusetts to make the needful appropriation, and so soon as a local habitation had been provided, the Board of Education unanimously elected Mr. Peirce to commence the enterprise.

It was with no little difficulty that the people of Nantucket could be persuaded to relinquish him ; nor was it easy for him to persuade himself to leave his happy home in their midst, where he was so much respected and loved; and where he was so well established at the head of a system of schools, which he had mainly devised, and which was working so satisfactorily under him. But no one was more fully aware of the defects of common schools than he. No one appreciated more profoundly the necessity of the especial preparation of teachers for their work. He was not the man who would refuse, from any personal considerations, what it was made to appear his duty to undertake for the benefit of the rising generations. He had admired, from the beginning, Horace Mann's generous consecration of himself to the improvement of the common schools. He discerned the wisdom of his plans, and the unsparing pains he took to carry them into operation. And, when that enlightened, devoted friend of humanity besought his help, with the earnest assurance that he knew no other man to whom he could so confidently intrust the commencement of that part of his improved system of schools, on which the success of the whole depended, Mr. Peirce could not withhold himself. He accepted the appointment, saying, "I had rather die than fail in the undertaking."

On the 3d of July, 1839, he entered upon his labors at Lexington, as principal of the first Normal School on this continent.

What a Normal School was to be, most persons could not divine. Conjectures were various; some of them ludicrous. Then, a few teachers seemed to feel that the rearing of such an institution was a derogatory imputation upon their whole fraternity. Some academies looked with an evil eye upon a seminary, founded in part by the Commonwealth, to do what they had hitherto assumed to be their especial work. Moreover, the admirable qualifications of Mr. Peirce to be a teacher of teachers were not much known off the Island of Nantucket, excepting to the Board of Education, (itself a novelty,) and a few zealots in the cause of reform. Not a note of congratulation welcomed him to his post. The aspect all around was cold and forbidding, except the countenance of Mr. Mann, and the few enlightened friends of education who regarded his coming as the dawning of a new day.

At the opening of the school, only three offered themselves to

become his pupils. The contrast between the full, flourishing establishment he had just left at Nantucket, and the "beggarly account of empty boxes," which were daily before him for the first three months, was very disheartening. He could not repress the apprehension that the Board of Education had made a fatal mistake, in intrusting the commencement of the enterprise to one so little known as himself throughout the Commonwealth; and he feared that Normal Schools would die at their birth, for want of something to live on. However, he had put his hand to the plough, and of course the furrow must be driven through, aye, and the whole field turned over, before he would relinquish his effort. He set about his work, as one determined to "do with his might what his hand found to do." He soon made his three pupils conscious that there was more to be known about even the primary branches of education than they had dreampt of; and better methods of teaching reading, spelling, grammar, arithmetic and geography, than were practised in the schools. Their reports of the searching thoroughness and other excellent peculiarities of the Normal Teacher attracted others to him. The number of his pupils steadily increased from term to term, until, at the expiration of his first three years of service, there were forty-two. In the course of those years, more than fifty went out from under his training, to teach, with certificates of his approbation; and the obvious improvement in their methods of governing children, and giving them instruction, demonstrated the utility of Normal Schools. His immediate successor, in 1842, in order to satisfy himself and the public on this point, sent a circular letter to every district in the Commonwealth, where a pupil of Mr. Peirce's was known to have been employed as an instructor, making the inquiries adapted to elicit the desired information. In every case, but one or two, testimonials were returned, setting forth the marked superiority of teachers from the Normal School. It became then a fixed fact, that such a seminary was needful,—that it would effect the improvement in common schools, which was of first importance—namely, the better qualification of teachers. Normal Schools have been multiplied; their usefulness is no longer questioned; ample provisions are made for their support; they have come to be regarded as an essential part of the improved system of public instruction in New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and several other states, besides Massachusetts. Is it, then, small praise, to have it said of any one, that we are indebted for the establishment of Normal Schools to him, more than to any other individual? If to Horace Mann belongs the honor of having made the need of such institutions so apparent, that private and public bounty was directed toward them,

it is due to Mr. Peirce to record that it was his inflexible perseverance, which overcame the obstacles that well-nigh precluded their commencement, and his admirable fidelity and skill which settled the question of their usefulness. One of the earliest and most devoted promoters of the educational improvements which have been introduced within the last twenty years, the gentleman who framed and set in operation the excellent school system of Rhode Island, and has done more than any body else to regenerate the school system of Connecticut, (the editor of this Journal is the only person who would be displeased should we name him,) the gentleman whose knowledge of the history of this revival of education is more extensive and thorough, and whose judgment of its causes and effects is more to be relied on, than that of any other man,—hardly excepting even Horace Mann,—that gentleman has more than once been heard to say,—"Had it not been for Mr. Cyrus Peirce, I consider that the cause of Normal Schools would have failed, or have been postponed for an indefinite period."

Let it, then, be added here, the selection of Mr. Peirce to commence this signal improvement, was not a matter of mere accident, or good fortune. It was the result of Mr. Mann's thorough appreciation of the nature of the undertaking, and profound insight into the qualifications of the one who should be trusted to commence it. He might have selected one of many gifted teachers, more widely known, and of more popular, attractive mien,—one who would, at the outset, have gathered about him a host of pupils. He might have found a few who could have taught some things, perhaps, better than Mr. Peirce. But there was no other man, within the sphere of his careful search, who combined so many of the qualities demanded, so many of the elements of certain success. If we should name another as comparable to him, it would be the late lamented David P. Page, the first principal of the New York Normal School, who excelled Mr. Peirce in popular gifts, and almost equaled him in all the fundamental requisites. Still, the preference was wisely given.

Mr. Peirce's profound reverence for truth is the basis of his character as a man and a teacher,—truth in every thing,—the whole truth, the exact truth. Never have we known another so scrupulous. His reverence for truth was ever active, ever working in him, and renewing itself, day by day, in some higher manifestation, or some deeper expression. Although he frequently, if not every day, closed his school with the admonition,—"my pupils, live to the truth,"—yet it never seemed like a vain repetition; it always appeared to come fresh from his heart, as if it were a new inspiration of his longing for them to become all that God had made them capable of being.

To pupils of a facile, temporizing, slipshod disposition, Mr. Peirce was tedious, because of his particularity. Not partly, almost, very nearly right, would ever satisfy him. Each answer that was given him to every question that he put, must be wholly, exactly correct; so correct as to make it self-evident that the one who gave it fully appreciated the truth expressed by the words he used; and used such words as made the truth luminous to others, who were capable of receiving it. This intellectual and moral conscientiousness soon captivated those of a kindred spirit, and, in due time, impressed the most heedless as an admirable, a divine characteristic. Surely it is so. It can not be too conspicuous in those, to whom may be intrusted the forming of the mental and moral habits of the young. For the divergence of "*almost* right," from "exactly right," may, in the course of time, be greater than any, except the Infinite mind, can estimate.

Attention to one thing at a time, and the thorough, complete understanding of every thing antecedent and preliminary, before attempting to advance in any branch of science, were principles on which Mr. Peirce insisted, until it was found to be futile to attempt to get forward under his tuition, if they were slighted. All shamming was detected by him; and skimming the surface of any subject made to appear silly. It was settled that nothing could be well taught to another, unless the teacher thoroughly comprehended what he set about to communicate. Therefore, much of the time of his pupils in the Normal School was devoted to the careful study of each branch of learning expected to be taught in the primary and grammar schools,—the primary being always accounted by him prior in importance, as well as in time. On nothing, except only moral culture, did Mr. Peirce dwell with more particularity, than on the first elements of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. He insisted that whenever a child has been put in full possession of these, he will be able to attain any degree of proficiency in each of the branches, and their dependdents, that he may take pains to seek. But, if these elementary parts have not been thoroughly learnt by any one, imperfection will, at some time, somewhere, show itself, and embarrass subsequent attempts at learning, with or without an instructor.

Next to thinking and expressing one's own thoughts, the most wonderful power given to man is that by which we may receive from the written or the printed page, and communicate audibly, the thoughts of another. Yet this power is in most cases very imperfectly unfolded, and very shabbily exercised. The number of good readers, within any one's acquaintance, may always be counted in a trice.

"To hear some parsons, how they preach,
How they run o'er all parts of speech,
And neither rise a note, nor sink;
Our learned Bishops, one would think,
Had taken school-boys from the rod
To make embassadors to God."

Upon nothing, excepting moral character, did Mr. Peirce bestow so much pains as upon the Art of Reading. And he was singularly successful in teaching it—especially the reading of our Sacred Scriptures. Yet was he lacking in what would seem to be the *sine qua non* of a fine reader, namely, a clear, sonorous voice. His deficiency in this respect, however, was triumphed over by the force of his intellect, and the depth of his emotional nature. It was forgotten, as one listened to his luminous, forcible reading of choice passages from the Bible, or other favorite books. His hearers caught the inspiration of his soul; so that, never has reading seemed to us so high an intellectual effort and treat, as when we have been listening to some of his pupils.

His method of teaching reading, from the beginning, is set forth in his lecture before the American Institute of Instruction, in 1844, which may be found in the volume published by the Institute that year. In order to save children from acquiring a monotonous, or drawling, or nasal tone, which it is so difficult afterward to correct, as well as to make reading, from the first, a more intelligible, intelligent, and agreeable exercise, Mr. Peirce, in that lecture, recommends, what he had tried with excellent success in his Model School, *beginning with words rather than letters.* We fear this method has not been faithfully tried in our schools generally; and we would take this occasion to commend it again to all who are about to commence teaching any children to read, at home, or in the primary schools. Try this method, as it is explained in the lecture just referred to. We commend it, not only on the high authority of Mr. Peirce, but on our own observation of its much better results.

In Arithmetic, Mr. Peirce was among the first to welcome and apply Mr. W. Colburn's method of teaching the relations and powers of numbers,—a method which can never be superseded, and the application of which has never been surpassed, if equaled, by any subsequent authors, excepting those who have built on his foundation. Mr. Colburn's method, however, may be abused, as it has been, by teachers who have not thoroughly understood it, or have been careless in applying it. Mr. Peirce taught his pupils in the Normal School how to teach Arithmetic *exactly* in the manner indicated by

Mr. Colburn. In this he preceded, though he never surpassed Mr. Tillinghast; and we take this occasion to add, neither of them quite equaled Miss Caroline Tilden, the favorite pupil of the one, and one of the favorite assistants of the other.

But we have not here room to specify any further. In every department of teaching, Mr. Peirce was, and taught his pupils to be, thorough, intelligent, and intelligible. He impressed it, in the first place, upon all whom he was preparing for the work, that, whatsoever they would communicate to others, they must first themselves thoroughly understand. The text-book, however excellent, may be of little avail to his class, unless the teacher knows more than the mere words of that book. And, secondly, the teacher can not help his pupils to acquire any part of any science, excepting so far as he may lead them clearly to comprehend it. Mr. Peirce continually detected and repudiated the substitution of memory for understanding; and earnestly enjoined it upon his pupils to do likewise, when they should become teachers.

As soon as practicable, after opening the Normal School at Lexington, Mr. Peirce instituted the Model Department,—a school composed of the children of the neighborhood, just such as would be found in most of our country district schools. In that he led his normal pupils, seriatim, by turns, to apply and test for themselves, the correctness, the excellence of the principles of teaching, which he was laboring to instil into them. This was the most peculiar part of the institution. In the management of it, he evinced great adroitness as well as indomitable perseverance, and untiring patience. In that Model Department, the future teachers, under his supervision, practised the best methods of governing and instructing children, so that each one, when she left the Normal School, carried with her *some experience* in the conduct of a common school.

Thus Mr. Peirce wrought three years at Lexington, performing an amount of labor, which, should we give it in detail, it might lessen, in the estimation of our readers, our credibility as a biographer. He fully justified the confidence which Mr. Mann and the Board of Education had reposed in him. And he gained continually the reverence and the love of his successive pupils. Strict as he was, uncompromising, exacting as he was, he was yet so just, so true, so faithful in his attentions to each individual,—so kind and sympathizing to all, even the least successful and most unlovely,—that he conciliated the hearts of all, not wholly excepting even the very few who were untractable in his hands. It was so obvious that he desired their highest good, so obvious that he was truly *paternal* in his regard for their personal

welfare and future usefulness, that "*Father Peirce*" soon came to be the title given him with one accord.

His labors and cares were too much even for his powers of attention and endurance. They were such, that he seldom allowed himself more than *four hours* for sleep, out of each twenty-four. He slighted nothing. Not the least thing was out of order, that he was responsible for. He gave personal attention to every exercise of each one of his pupils—especial consideration to the case of every one who needed. He kept a watchful eye upon the deportment of all, out of school as well as in, and had a care for the comfort and especially for the health of all. It was more than he could longer endure.

In 1842, therefore, at the end of three years, he was obliged to resign his charge. "It was," we quote from the Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Education, "the ardent desire of the Board to secure the further services of that gentleman in a place, which he has filled with such honor to himself and such usefulness to the community; but, owing to the state of his health and to other circumstances, he felt obliged to tender his resignation, which the Board most reluctantly accepted. Never, perhaps, have greater assiduity and fidelity distinguished and rewarded, the labors of any instructor. Mr. Peirce has retired from the employment of teaching; but the models of instruction which he has left, and his power of exciting an enthusiasm in the noble cause of education, will long remain as a blessing to the young."

He left Lexington, regretted by all, and returned once more to his loved home on the Island of Nantucket, under the painful apprehension that his labors as a teacher were ended, and that the rest of his life must be spent as an invalid. But the entire repose of body and mind which he was there permitted to enjoy, recruited him more and much sooner than was expected; and, at the end of two years, he was ready to engage again in the work of teaching.

His successor, at Lexington, gladly resigned the place in his favor. He was at once reëlected by a unanimous vote of the Board of Education, and resumed the charge of the Normal School in August, 1844;—not, however, in Lexington. The number of pupils had so greatly increased that much larger accommodations were needed than could be furnished in Lexington. A building of suitable dimensions, but erected for another purpose, had just then been purchased in West Newton. All arrangements necessary for the school were to be made in it. The devising and superintending of these devolved upon Mr. Peirce; and he soon showed, so far as the limits within which he was required to work would permit, that he knew how a school-room ought to be

constructed, arranged, furnished, warmed and ventilated, as well as how those who should be gathered into it, ought to be instructed. Every one who came to view the work, when completed, acknowledged that he had made the best possible use of the premises and the funds, that had been put at his disposal.

In that somewhat new and much enlarged sphere, he labored yet five years more, with his wonted fidelity, skill and success. He had now very able assistants, those on whose faithfulness as well as ability, he could implicitly rely. Yet was his attention unremitted. He was mindful of every thing. His pupils were not regarded merely as component parts of their several classes. Each of them was an individual. Each might have peculiar difficulties to contend with, peculiar obstacles to success. He, therefore, sought to know each one personally, that he might render the aid, and suggest the discipline applicable to each. True, as he never spared himself, so he rigidly exacted of his pupils all that he knew them to be able to perform. Yet, he sympathized with every one of them. He was as a father to them all. The discovery of any serious faults in any of them only made him more solicitous for their improvement, more tender in his manner; although never *indulgent*, never remitting what it was right to require.

It was during this second connexion with the Normal School that Mr. Pierce laid the foundation of a disease that will probably cause him much discomfort, it may be severe suffering, so long as he abides in the body.

It was his unvarying determination to have every thing pertaining to the school-house so carefully arranged, and in such perfect order betimes, that not one minute of the hours appropriated to school exercises should be lost. All his pupils were females. He, therefore, could not call upon them for assistance in some of the "chores" that needed to be done every day and night, especially in the winter season. Neither could he hire the service of any man, who would *never fail* to do every thing that needed to be done, at the right time, and in the best manner. Furthermore, he was unwilling to increase the expenses of his pupils, many of whom were poor, by swelling the amount of incidental charges, which devolved upon them. During each of the winters at West Newton, as he used to do while at Lexington, when the night was very cold, threatening an unusually severe morning, he would go, at eleven or twelve o'clock, and replenish the furnace, to insure a comfortable room at the opening of the school. He would always go, at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, attend to the fires, sweep off the snow from the steps, shovel paths around the house, bring water enough from a neighboring well to supply the demands

of the day, and then, returning home, would devote himself to study until school time, carefully preparing himself upon every lesson which he was about to teach. It may seem to some of our readers that we are condescending too much in making mention of such matters; but, it is in faithful attention to *small* matters that the depth and strength of a man's principles are evinced.* And the fact that it was these things which brought upon him a malady that will be life-long, gives them no little importance in the memoir of this excellent man.

In the summer of 1849, he was compelled again to resign the charge of the Normal School, which might almost be called a thing of his own creation; to the welfare of which every power of his soul and of his body had been consecrated for eight years. And now he must leave it, with the sad consciousness that health and strength were so seriously impaired that he was no longer able, and never again would be able, to discharge, as he had been wont to do, the duties of the place he had filled so long. Yes, literally *filled*. No one but himself could recount any of Father Peirce's shortcomings. His measure of performance had run over rather than come short. That was a day of sore trial to his feelings, and the feelings of the many who revered and loved him. Yet was it an occasion of joy, of generous exultation. He was to receive an honorable discharge from an arduous post, the duties of which had been excellently well fulfilled.

The highest commendations of his fidelity and success were bestowed by the Board of Education and others, who had been most cognizant of his labors. His pupils, in great numbers, gathered about him, to testify their respect and affection. The Normal School-rooms, which he had constructed, and had permeated with his earnest, devoted spirit, every day of every term for five years, were tastefully and pertinently decorated; and there, in the presence of as many of his normal children, and tried friends, and generous patrons of the institution, as the rooms would admit, he was addressed by the Hon. Horace Mann, who had selected him for that high place, had persuaded him to accept it, and who could, more justly than any body else, appreciate the exceeding value of his services. It was a valedictory honorable alike to him who gave and him who received it.

A purse, containing about five hundred dollars, contributed by his pupils and other friends, was then presented, to induce and enable him to accept the appointment, tendered to him by the American Peace Society, to go as one of their representatives to the World's Peace Congress, to be held shortly in the city of Paris.

* Mr. Peirce required nothing of his pupils, that he did not himself practise. During the fifty years of his school-keeping, he never absented himself in a single instance for the sake of any recreation. *And he was tardy only twice.*

This was almost the only recreation he had allowed himself to think of taking since he left college, in 1810.

He went to Europe in company with a long-tried friend,—one of the same ripe age with himself, of similar tastes and character,—the Rev. Dr. Joseph Allen, of Northborough, who, like himself, had well-earned a respite from care and toil. Both of them were disciples of the venerable Worcester, the Apostle of Peace, and had, for many years, inculcated and practised the principles of the Gospel, which that holy man labored to redeem from neglect. It was, therefore, with no common interest that they went to a convention of persons, called from all parts of the world, to meet in the metropolis of the most belligerent nation of modern Europe. The meeting convened on the 22d day of August, 1849. There they saw, heard and communed with many of the pure, Christian men of Christendom, who, in the midst of the clash of armies, the shouts of victory, the lamentations of defeat, had long seen and deplored the folly as well as the wickedness of war, and had been earnestly inquiring for some other modes of adjusting the differences which must needs arise between nations, similar to those that are relied upon in cases that arise between individuals.

They afterward spent some months, traveling in England and on the Continent, enjoying all the gratification that the time and their opportunities allowed them, and their abundant stores of historical and classical knowledge qualified them to partake of.

In a letter lately received from Dr. Allen, he says of Mr. Peirce:

> I never fully appreciated his merits, until he became connected with the Normal School. There, as all know, he was not only principal but *princeps*. There he exhibited the abundant fruits of his patient, faithful labors, continued, without intermission, through the years of his youth and manhood; and there he gained a name that will live and be honored by future generations. * * * It was my good fortune to be his fellow-traveler in a tour through some parts of England and the Continent, in the summer of 1849. We went in the same packet, rode in the same cars or carriages, lodged at the same inns. This close and long-continued intercourse served to cement our friendship, and greatly to increase my high respect for him as a scholar, and a man of integrity, honor and purity,—*an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile.*

Soon after his return from Europe, in 1850, partly because of his pecuniary need, but mainly because of his love of teaching, he became an assistant in the excellent school opened by Mr. Nathaniel P. Allen, in the premises lately of the Normal School, which was removed to Framingham; and there, like the Hon. John Q. Adams in Congress, he has for several years been discharging, with exemplary fidelity, the duties of a subordinate, in the very place where he had so long presided.

If there be one excellence which, more than another, has characterized the schools kept by Mr. Peirce, from the beginning of his long career, it is the especial attention he has paid to the *moral* culture of

his pupils. He early perceived that the development of the intellectual forces of the children of men, and the bestowment upon them of large stores of literary and scientific knowledge, without a corresponding unfolding of their moral natures, fitted and often would rather dispose them to vice more than to virtue. It has long been obvious that "knowledge is power" for evil as well as for good. Mr. Peirce was fully persuaded that those instructors were conferring a questionable benefit upon society, if nothing worse, who were sending out children, enabled to run well on any of the various courses which might be thrown open to their political ambition, their love of money, or desire for social distinction, unless they have taken all necessary pains to fortify them against temptation, by awakening in their hearts a profound reverence for all the laws of God, and an unfeigned, impartial respect for the rights and feelings of their fellow-men.

His views on this fundamentally important matter were fully exhibited in a carefully prepared Essay on "Crime, its cause and cure," which he presented incognito to the committee of the American Institute of Instruction on Prize Essays, in 1853. Each member of that committee by himself examined it, and formed his decision without conference with the other members. They all concurred in awarding to his essay the premium offered. And yet, when the essay came to be read before the Institute at New Haven, it was misunderstood, misrepresented, vehemently opposed, and finally forbidden a place among the publications of the Institute. Seldom has there been such an instance of hot haste in a deliberative assembly of wise and good men. The essay was soon after published, just as it had been read to the Institute. It vindicates itself against the decision of that body. And it has also the endorsement of such men as George B. Emerson and Solomon Adams. The essay does not, as was alledged, charge upon the schools of New England that they teach immorality, or that they are the *productive cause* of the increase of crime among us. It only asserts and maintains what was seen to be true by the most careful observers, and has since become more and more apparent to all who take any notice,—1st, that *merely intellectual* education is no security against immorality or crime; 2d, that facts show that crime *may* increase at the same time with increased attention to education,—the common education of the school;—that this is the case, to some extent, in our own New England; and for the reason, in part, that the common education of our schools has in it too little of the moral element. We cultivate the head more than the heart. And 3d, that there is, hence, a call upon teachers, committees, parents, and all friends of true education, to make a larger outlay

for moral instruction, assigning to it in our schools the high place its importance demands. No propositions respecting our schools could have been announced, that were then, and are now, more easily proved than these. Could Mr. Peirce's essay be read again to the Institute, at this day, it would meet with a very different reception. The eyes of many more men, here and in Europe, have opened since 1853, to discern what he then saw. While we are writing these pages, a grave amount of testimony, exactly to the point in question, is brought to us in a contemporary journal, *The Religious Magazine*, as follows :

> Education in New England has not been receding these dozen years. Schools have been multiplied ; universities have been enlarged ; the standard of scholarship has been raised. Yet the grosser kinds of iniquity have been spreading too. A careful examination of the records of penitentiaries and criminal dockets, has shown that this growth of lawlessness is just as great, in proportion, among those classes that instruction reaches, as with the abject and illiterate. Joseph Fletcher, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, in a careful work on the moral statistics of England and Wales, shows that crime is not according to ignorance. Similar returns from France indicate, in fact, that the most highly educated districts are the most criminal districts. A series of able articles in the "Morning Chronicle," for 1849 and 1850, go to establish the same strange and almost paradoxical conclusion respecting different parts of Great Britain. The testimony of many chaplains of prisons is brought to confirm it. The ingenious treatise of Herbert Spencer, entitled "Social Statistics," adduces much parallel evidence. There may be some element in such data to modify an inference of the full breadth of the apparent facts. Yet is it a most impressive result. Ought it not to satisfy us that mental cultivation and moral principle are two things,—meant, no doubt to be harmonized and to help each other, but easily separated, and even made perversely hostile ?

Horace Mann took the true ground, in his late address at Antioch College, in maintaining that colleges ought to be held responsible for the moral as well as the intellectual character of its graduates ; and that diplomas should either contain, or be accompanied with, a discriminating certificate of moral character.

We think the American Institute of Instruction owe it to themselves, and to their committee on prizes, not less than to Mr. Peirce, to reconsider their action in 1853 respecting his essay, and to give it the honorable place among their publications to which it is entitled.

In accordance with the conviction declared in that essay, and animated by the spirit which breathes through it, Mr. Peirce, from the first, has given his chief attention to the moral conduct and principles of his pupils. No violation of the truth, in act or word, no obliquity of language, or feeling, or motive, would he pass lightly over. Any thing of the kind revealed to him that there was unsoundness at the very basis of his pupil's character ; and he had no heart, until that should be remedied, to go on building upon a foundation that he knew might at any time give way, and leave the superstructure a moral ruin,—all the more unsightly and pitiful if decorated with the

ornaments which learning, genius and taste may have entwined around the fallen columns.

Of course, it was in the preparation and recitation of their lessons, for the most part, that he was led to the discovery of his pupil's faults, or weaknesses,—was brought into conflict with the evil that was in them. He never punished, he never reproved a pupil for failing to do what he was unable to do; but only for negligence, for inattention, for not having made the effort he was bound to make. This he justly accounted an immorality. It was unfaithfulness to one's self; a fraud upon the teacher; ingratitude to one's parents; impiety toward God. No one could have been more tender, sympathizing, than Mr. Peirce always was, to one in difficulty. He would explain what was obscure. He would remove all obstacles out of his way, excepting that which the pupil alone could remove,—the obstacle in his own will,—his indisposition to make the needful effort. *That* the pupil must make himself. And Mr. Peirce never released him; never qualified a demand that it was reasonable to enforce.

Any artifices at the time of recitation, any promptings by word or sign, any sly lookings to discover what ought to have been learnt before, if detected, (as they were very apt to be by his vigilant eye or ear,) were sure to bring upon the culprits severe reprimands, it may have been some more enduring punishments. He could not look upon such as light offences,—merely roguish tricks, pardonable in thoughtless boys. They were frauds—attempts to make things and persons appear to be what they were not. And, if boys and girls did not appreciate the iniquity of such things, it ought all the more carefully to be exposed to them, and impressed upon them.

So, too, unnecessary tardiness and absence from school, playing or whispering during the hours assigned to study, were denounced and treated as grave offences against the little community, (which every school is,) no less than against one's self. Each and all of these things were reproved and punished, not so much because they were contrary to the laws which he had enacted, as because they were wrong in themselves, contrary to the eternal laws of right. He was careful to make the morality of all his requirements apparent to his pupils. His was not an arbitrary government. His laws were not matters of his own invention. They were the principles of righteousness applied to the conduct of children.

We have already stated that, at the outset of his career as a teacher, Mr. Peirce resorted to the then common expedients for insuring order, obedience, and attention to study; to wit, corporal punishments, appeals to emulation, offers of premiums. By these he did, for the

most part, obtain good recitations. He kept what was accounted a good school. He got to himself a high reputation. He could always have as many pupils as he saw fit to receive. For, behind all these things, there were accuracy, thoroughness, untiring assiduity, and impartial fidelity. It would seem, too, from the letters we have received, that, with the exception of the few very perverse, ill-disposed ones, he was generally beloved as well as respected by his pupils. They were all satisfied that he desired to promote their highest welfare; and that he was able as well as willing to teach them all they were willing or able to learn. Goldsmith's description of a country schoolmaster, might be taken as quite a correct likeness of him in that day, and of the regard in which he was held by the parents and their children.

But it was not long before he came to distrust the common appliances, and, at last, long ago, utterly to abandon and discountenance the use of them. He has been so successful in the management of his schools for the last twenty years, without corporal punishments, premiums, or artificial emulations, and withal has been so prominent an advocate of the new doctrine of school government, that it may be instructive, as well as interesting to our readers, to be informed of the process of the change, which took place in him, and the reasons for that change.

Our account will be taken mainly from a letter, which he wrote to a very particular friend,—wrote without the expectation that any part of it would be given to the public. It will speak for itself. It will call forth responses from the hearts of many, who have had, or may have, much experience in school-keeping.

The change was gradual, the work of time, and arose from various considerations. 1st. I could not, at least I did not, always administer corporal punishment, without awakening, or yielding to emotions of a doubtful character. I began to suspect that the effect upon myself was not good; and I could see that it often shocked, disturbed, but did not exalt the moral sentiment of the school. In a word, to both parties, it seemed to me, to work spiritual *death* rather than *life*. 2d. Often, after having inflicted it, I was visited with very troublesome doubts; such as, that possibly I had been too severe, even where I had no doubt that the offender deserved some chastisement; sometimes with a query, whether I could not have gotten along quite as well without any blows at all. This last query was pretty apt to arise the next day, after all the excitement of the occasion had subsided. 3d. Then again I was often troubled with the thought, that possibly I had not made sufficient allowance for the circumstances, and considerations, which pleaded in behalf of the culprit, such as natural temperament, inherited disposition, his previous training, surrounding influences, and peculiar temptations. 4th. Moreover, when I witnessed the blessed, the heavenly effects of forgiveness, and encouragement, I would almost resolve forthwith to put away the ferule and strap, and rely on moral suasion alone. 5th. As I lived longer, and observed, and experienced more, if I grew no wiser in other respects, I did in the knowledge of myself. I saw more of my own imperfections and faults, and self-conviction made me more compassionate and forgiving toward others. In fine, I came to the belief, that the *natural laws and their penalties*, to which all men, and the children of men, alike, are subject, from the beginning of their existence, were founded in love,

as well as wisdom ; yea, that our sufferings, (the consequences of transgression,) were, equally with our enjoyments, evidences of the wisdom and benevolence of the Heavenly Father. I thought, too, that I could discern a connexion between the transgression committed and the penalty endured,—an adaptation of the one to the other, in the divine discipline, the like of which I could not see in my own *artificial inflictions*. The punishments I was wont to apply, began to seem to me harsh, far-fetched, arbitrary, having no relation to the offences committed. And ought we not, said I to myself, in our discipline of children, to strive to imitate, as closely as possible, the Divine administration ? On philosophical principles, too, it seemed to me, the educator of the young could not be justified, in appealing to fear and force. Hope is a higher, nobler principle than fear. Hope, cheers, quickens, awakens aspiration, excites to effort and sustains it. Fear addresses itself to selfishness ; depresses and debases the subject of it. Moreover, it seemed to me, as the Creator had *adapted* the human mind to seek, apprehend and enjoy the truth, that, whenever truth was rightly presented, it would be apprehended, embraced, enjoyed, as naturally as the stomach receives, and relishes its appropriate food, without the extraneous and ill-adapted stimulus of *blows*. He, whose inspiration gave *understanding* to man, did not so fashion it as to render *blows* necessary to enable it to receive and appreciate knowledge. I came to see less and less clearly the loving kindness, or wisdom of such appliances.

God, creation, man, human relations, indeed all things began to put on a new and more beautiful aspect. Under the rule and quickening influence of love, the school-room wore a new and brighter face,—brighter prospectively, when I entered it in the morning ; brighter retrospectively, when I left it at night.

The above, I trust, will serve to hint to you the leading considerations that wrought with me a change of views and of practice, in regard to the whole subject of school discipline ; in regard to the means and motives to be resorted to, in the great work of education. The persons chiefly instrumental in bringing about this change in me, quite unconsciously it may have been to themselves, were the Rev. Mr. Mottey, late of Lynnfield, Mass. ; the Rev. Dr. Damon, late of West Cambridge, and Lucretia Mott. The conversations of each of these excellent persons, helped to bring me to the result I have attempted to describe. I think it was after listening to a conversation from Mrs. Mott, at Nantucket, in 1827, that I definitely formed the resolution to *attempt* thenceforward to keep school without the *intervention*, (for I can not say *aid*,) of *blows*.

In the same communication, of which the foregoing is an abstract, Mr. Peirce, says :—"The book to which, after the Bible, I owe most, is that incomparable work of George Combe, '*On the Constitution of Man*.' It was to me a most suggestive book ; and I regard it as the best treatise on education, and the philosophy of man, which I have ever met with."

Whatever may have been his methods of teaching and governing, Mr. Pierce, from the beginning to the end of his career, has made the impression upon his pupils, that he was able to give them all the instruction they were disposed or able to receive ; and that it was his unfeigned desire, and constant endeavor, to lead them to become truly *wise*, and truly *good*.

The highest tribute that could be paid to his excellence, as a man and a teacher, would be a compendium of the very numerous testimonials which lie before us, from his earliest and his latest pupils. We have already given several from those of the former class. A few from the latter must suffice, and will appropriately close our memoir.

One, who was a member of his first class at Lexington, in 1839 and 1840, writes thus : "I soon learnt to respect him, for his untiring

watchfulness, his uncompromising integrity, and his unceasing faithfulness—'instant in season and out of season.' To these I can bear a most grateful testimony."

Another, who was one of his pupils at West Newton, in 1849, says: "As an earnest, thorough, and effective teacher, I believe him to be unequaled. Endeavoring, as he mainly did, to rear the education of his pupils upon a true, solid basis, he dwelt especially upon the *elements* of every thing to be taught; aiming constantly to give that thorough, mental discipline, which puts the pupil into possession of his powers of acquisition and preservation. But Father Peirce's crowning excellence, was his moral power. I have never known a person who wielded so palpable an influence in this respect. Few natures could long withstand it. And I believe the good he has done in this, the highest, most essential, but most neglected part of human development, will never be duly estimated in time. * * * He combines, it seems to me, all the gentleness, tenderness, delicacy of a refined woman, with all the *manliness* of a true man."

An excellent young man, who became one of his pupils, soon after his return from Europe, has sent us the following testimony. "To Mr. Peirce, under God, I owe the knowledge I have acquired, and the moral character I have formed. I went to his school with strong proclivities to dissipation, and an utter distaste for study. With great forbearance, and by skilful, as well as kind management, he has enabled me to overcome both. He exerts quietly a very powerful influence over those who are intrusted to his discipline. He at once commands their respect; and, in due time, engages their affection."

But we must close;—and we close in the words of one, who was first a very favorite pupil, and afterward, for years, a most devoted and effective assistant,—Mrs. E. N. Walton:

I do not now recall any striking incidents, that would illustrate Father Peirce's character, either as a teacher, or as the pioneer in the great struggle which has resulted in the life and acknowledged necessity of Normal Schools. His life was uniformly so true, and his labors so unremitted, that, as I look back upon them, I discern no points that were strikingly prominent above others. The impression is rather that of a *beautiful whole*. * * * Every life has its lesson for humanity; and this, it seems to me, is taught by his. The almost omnipotence, within man's sphere, of a strong, inflexible *will*, and of patient, unremitted efforts in striving for the truth, and obeying one's convictions of right. His energy, united with his conscientiousness, made him what he was, and enabled him to accomplish what he did. What he undertook, he would do. *Attempting* was with him, so far as human efforts could make it, a synonym of *succeeding*. At first, I wondered at the results he accomplished; but an occurrence, which happened while we were at West Newton, showed me so fully his peculiar temperament, that I never afterward doubted that he would perform any task he set himself about. Whatever he could do, and had shown to be practicable, he insisted should be attempted by others. His pupils generally were *real workers*. They did not dare do otherwise than strive, and keep striving to the end. They felt, when they set about teaching, that there must be no failure; the whole normal enterprise rested,

for the time being, upon their shoulders, and they must bear it, though they were crushed beneath it.

His power of example was immense. Those pupils, upon whom his seal is deepest set, are remarkable for their energy, their faithfulness, their zeal and their *attention to the little things.*

"Learn first that which comes first." "Attend to one thing at a time." "Do thoroughly what you attempt to do at all." "Nip evil in the bud." "Be faithful in small matters." "Be firm, and yet be mild." "Be yourselves what you would have your pupils become." These maxims he repeated again and again to those he was training to be teachers, in view of their prospective duties. And "Live to the Truth,"—"Live to the Truth," was so ingrafted into our normal being that, should the mere walls of Normal Hall be tumbled to the earth, the last sound that would come from them, to our ears at least, would be, "Live to the Truth."

NOTE.

The following letter, addressed in 1851, by Mr. Peirce, to Hon. Henry Barnard, then Superintendent of Common Schools in Connecticut, embodies his own views as to the aims of his labors as Principal of the Normal School at Lexington, and West Newton.

"DEAR SIR:—You ask me 'what I aimed to accomplish, and would aim to accomplish now, with my past experience before me, in a Normal School.'

I answer briefly, that it was my aim, and it would be my aim again, to make better teachers, and especially, better teachers for our common schools; so that those primary seminaries, on which so many depend for their education, might answer, in a higher degree, the end of their institution. Yes, to make better teachers; teachers who would understand, and do their business better; teachers, who should know more of the nature of children, of youthful developments, more of the subjects to be taught, and more of the true methods of teaching; who would teach more philosophically, more in harmony with the natural development of the young mind, with a truer regard to the order and connection in which the different branches of knowledge should be presented to it, and, of course, more successfully. Again, I felt that there was a call for a truer government, a higher training and discipline, in our schools; that the appeal to the rod, to a sense of shame and fear of bodily pain, so prevalent in them, had a tendency to make children mean, secretive, and vengeful, instead of high-minded, truthful, and generous; and I wished to see them in the hands of teachers, who could understand the higher and purer motives of action, as gratitude, generous affection, sense of duty, by which children should be influenced, and under which their whole character should be formed. In short, I was desirous of putting our schools into the hands of those who would make them places in which children could learn, not only to read, and write, and spell, and cipher, but gain information on various other topics, (as accounts, civil institutions, natural history, physiology, political economy, &c.) which would be useful to them in after life, and have all their faculties, (physical, intellectual and moral,) trained in such harmony and proportion, as would result in the highest formation of character. This is what I supposed the object of Normal Schools to be. Such was my object.

But in accepting the charge of the first American Institution of this kind, I did not act in the belief that there were no good teachers, or good schools among us; or that I was more wise, more fit to teach, than all my fellows. On the contrary, I knew that there were, both within and without Massachusetts, excellent schools, and not a few of them, and teachers wiser than myself; yet my conviction was strong, that the ratio of such schools to the whole number of schools were small; and that the teachers in them, for the most part, had grown up to be what they were, from long observation, and through the discipline of an experience painful to themselves, and more painful to their pupils.

It was my impression also, that a majority of those engaged in school-keeping, taught few branches, and those imperfectly, that they possessed little fitness for their business, did not understand well, either the nature of children or the subjects they professed to teach, and had little skill in the art of teaching or governing schools. I could not think it possible for them, therefore, to make

their instructions very intelligible, interesting, or profitable to their pupils, or present to them the motives best adapted to secure good lessons and good conduct, or, in a word, adopt such a course of training as would result in a sound development of the faculties, and the sure formation of a good character. I admitted that a skill and power to do all this might be acquired by trial, if teachers continued in their business long enough; but while teachers were thus learning, I was sure that pupils must be suffering. In the process of time, a man may find out by experiment, (trial,) how to tan hides and convert them into leather. But most likely the time would be long, and he would spoil many before he got through. It would be far better for him, we know, to get some knowledge of Chemistry, and spend a little time in his neighbor's tannery, before he sets up for himself. In the same way, the farmer may learn what trees, and fruits, and seeds, are best suited to particular soils, and climates, and modes of culture, but it must be by a needless outlay of time and labor, and the incurring of much loss. If wise, he would first learn the principles and facts which agricultural experiments have already established, and then commence operations. So the more I considered the subject, the more the conviction grew upon my mind, that by a judicious course of study, and of discipline, teachers may be prepared to enter on their work, not only with the hope, but almost with the assurance of success. I did not then, I do not now, (at least in the fullest extent of it,) assent to the doctrine so often expressed in one form or another, that there are no general principles to be recognized in education; no general methods to be followed in the art of teaching; that all depends upon the individual teacher; that every principle, motive and method, must owe its power to the skill with which it is applied; that what is true, and good, and useful in the hands of one, may be quite the reverse in the hands of another; and of course, that every man must invent his own methods of teaching and governing, it being impossible successfully to adopt those of another. To me it seemed that education had claims to be regarded as a science, being based on immutable principles, of which the practical teacher, though he may modify them to meet the change of ever-varying circumstances, can never lose sight.

That the educator should watch the operations of nature, the development of the mind, discipline those faculties whose activities first appear, and teach that knowledge first, which the child can most easily comprehend, viz., that which comes in through the senses, rather than through reason and the imagination; that true education demands, or rather implies the training, strengthening, and perfecting of all the faculties by means of the especial exercise of each; that in teaching, we must begin with what is simple and known, and go on by easy steps to what is complex and unknown; that for true progress and lasting results, it were better for the attention to be concentrated on a few studies, and for a considerable time, than to be divided among many, changing from one to another at short intervals; that in training children we must concede a special recognition to the principle of curiosity, a love of knowledge, and so present truth as to keep this principle in proper action; that the pleasure of acquiring, and the advantage of possessing knowledge, may be made, and should be made, a sufficient stimulus to sustain wholesome exertion without resorting to emulation, or medals, or any rewards other than those which are the natural fruits of industry and attainment; that for securing order and obedience, there are better ways than to depend solely or chiefly upon the rod, or appeals to fear; that much may be done by way of prevention of evil; that gentle means should always first be tried; that undue attention is given to intellectual training in our schools, to the neglect of physical and moral; that the training of the faculties is more important than the communication of knowledge; that the discipline, the instruction of the school-room, should better subserve the interests of real life, than it now does;—these are some of the principles, truths, facts, in education, susceptible, I think, of the clearest demonstration, and pretty generally admitted now, by all enlightened educators.

The old method of teaching Arithmetic, for instance, by taking up some printed treatise and solving abstract questions consisting of large numbers, working blindly by what must appear to the pupil arbitrary rules, would now be regarded as less philosophical, less in conformity to mental development, than the more modern way of beginning with mental Arithmetic, using practical questions, which involve small numbers, and explaining the reason of every step as you go along.

So in the study of Grammar, no Normal teacher, whether a graduate or not, of a Normal School, would require his pupils to commit the whole text-book to memory, before looking at the nature of words, and their application in the structure of sentences. Almost all have found out that memorizing the Grammar-book, and the exercise of parsing, do very little toward giving one a knowledge of the English language.

Neither is it learning Geography, to read over and commit to memory, statistics of the length and breadth of countries, their boundaries, latitude and longitude, &c., &c., without map or globe, or any visible illustration, as was once the practice. Nor does the somewhat modern addition of maps and globes much help the process, unless the scholar, by a previous acquaintance with objects in the outer world, has been prepared to use them. The shading for mountains, and black lines for rivers on maps, will be of little use to a child who has not already some idea of a mountain and a river.

And the teacher who should attempt to teach reading by requiring a child to repeat from day to day, and from month to month, the whole alphabet, until he is familiar with all the letters, as was the fashion in former days, would deserve to lose his place and be sent himself to school. Could any thing be more injudicious? Is it not more in harmony with Nature's work, to begin with simple, significant words, or rather sentences, taking care always to select such as are easy and intelligible, as well as short? Or, if letters be taken first, should they not be formed into small groups, on some principle of association, and be combined with some visible object?

Surely, the different methods of teaching the branches above-mentioned, are not all equally good. Teaching is based on immutable principles, and may be regarded as an art.

Nearly thirty years' experience in the business of teaching, I thought, had given me some acquaintance with its true principles and processes, and I deemed it no presumption to believe that I could teach them to others. This I attempted to do in the Normal School at Lexington; 1st. didactically, *i. e.* by precept, in the form of familiar conversations and lectures; 2d. by giving every day, and continually, in my own manner of teaching, an exemplification of my theory; 3d. by requiring my pupils to teach each other, in my presence, the things which I had taught them; and 4th. by means of the Model School, where, under my general supervision, the Normal pupils had an opportunity, both to prove and to improve their skill in teaching and managing schools. At all our recitations, (the modes of which were very various,) and in other connections, there was allowed the greatest freedom of inquiry and remark, and principles, modes, processes, every thing indeed relating to school-keeping, was discussed. The thoughts and opinions of each one were thus made the property of the whole, and there was infused into all hearts a deeper and deeper interest in the teachers' calling. In this way the Normal School became a kind of standing Teachers' Institute.

But for a particular account of my manner and processes at the Normal School, allow me to refer you to a letter which I had the honor, at your request, to address to you from Lexington, Jan. 1, 1841, and which was published in the Common School Journal, both of Connecticut and Massachusetts, (vol. 3.)

What success attended my labors, I must leave to others to say. I acknowledge, it was far from being satisfactory to myself. Still the experiment convinced me that Normal Schools may be made a powerful auxiliary to the cause of education. A thorough training in them, I am persuaded, will do much toward supplying the want of experience. It will make the teachers' work easier, surer, better. I have reason to believe that Normal pupils are much indebted for whatever of fitness they possess for teaching, to the Normal School. They uniformly profess so to feel. I have, moreover, made diligent inquiry in regard to their success, and it is no exaggeration to say, that it has been manifestly great. Strong testimonials to the success of many of the early graduates of the Lexington (now W. Newton) Normal School, were published with the 8th Report of the late Secretary of the Board of Education, and may be found in the 7th vol. of the Massachusetts Common School Journal.

But it is sometimes asked, (and the inquiry deserves an answer,) Allowing that teaching is an art, and that teachers may be trained for their business, have we not High Schools and Academies, in which the various school branches are well taught? May not teachers in them be prepared for their work?

Where is the need then of a distinct order of Seminaries for training teachers? I admit we have Academies, High Schools, and other schools, furnished with competent teachers, in which is excellent teaching; but at the time of the establishment of the Normal Schools in Massachusetts, there was not, to my knowledge, any first-rate institution exclusively devoted to training teachers for our common schools; neither do I think there is now any, except the Normal Schools. And teachers can not be prepared for their work anywhere else, so well as in seminaries exclusively devoted to this object. The art of teaching must be made the great, the paramount, the only concern. It must not come in as subservient to, or merely collateral with any thing else whatever. And again, a Teachers' Seminary should have annexed to it, or rather as an integral part of it, a model, or experimental school for practice.

Were I to be placed in a Normal School again, the only difference in my aim would be to give more attention to the development of the faculties, to the spirit and motives by which a teacher should be moved, to physical and moral education, to the inculcation of good principles and good manners.

In conclusion, allow me to recapitulate. It was my aim, and it would be my aim again, in a Normal School, to raise up for our common schools especially, a better class of teachers,—teachers who would not only teach more and better than those already in the field, but who would govern better; teachers, who would teach in harmony with the laws of juvenile development, who would secure diligent study and good lessons and sure progress, without a resort to emulation and premiums, and good order from higher motives than the fear of the rod or bodily pain; teachers, who could not only instruct well in the common branches, as reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., but give valuable information on a variety of topics, such as accounts, history, civil institutions, political economy, and physiology; bring into action the various powers of children, and prepare them for the duties of practical life; teachers, whose whole influence on their pupils, direct and indirect, should be good, tending to make them, not only good readers, geographers, grammarians, arithmeticians, &c., but good scholars, good children, obedient, kind, respectful, mannerly, truthful; and in due time, virtuous, useful citizens, kind neighbors, high-minded, noble, pious men and women. And this I attempted to do by inculcating the truth in the art of teaching and governing,—the truth in all things; and by giving them a living example of it in my own practice."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 022 139 966 3

THE

American Journal of Education.

No. XI.—DECEMBER, 1857.

CONTENTS.

PAGE.

PORTRAIT OF CYRUS PEIRCE. 273
I. MEMOIR OF CYRUS PEIRCE. 275
II. CULTIVATION OF THE REFLECTIVE FACULTIES. By William Russell. *Continued*. . . 309
III. INFLUENCE OF PESTALOZZI ON THE POPULAR SCHOOLS OF GERMANY. 341
IV. THE HIERONYMIANS, or Brethren of the Common Life. From the German of Karl Von Raumer. 357
V. NATIONAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND. 364
VI. LAURA BRIDGMAN. By S. G. Howe, Superintendent of Perkins Asylum for the Blind. 381
VII. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF JOHN STURM. From the German of Karl Von Raumer. *Concluded*. 401
VIII. NEW YORK STATE INSTITUTION FOR IDIOTS. 416
Illustration, Perspective of Building. 416
IX. EDUCATIONAL VIEWS OF MARTIN LUTHER. By Karl Von Raumer. 421
1. Home Government, and Training of Children. 421
2. Bad Training. 424
3. Monkish Training of the Young. 426
4. Offence given to Children. 226
5. Degenerate Children. 428
6. Lawful Disobedience. 429
7. Schools—Address to the Town Councils of Germany. 430
8. Duty of School Attendance of Children. 440
9. Dignity and Difficulty of the work of Teaching. 441
10. Plan for School Organization. 442
11. Universities. 442
12. The Bible. 443
13. Languages. 444
14. Natural Sciences. 445
15. History. 445
16. Logic. 445
17. Mathematics. 448
18. Physical Exercise. 448
19. Music. 449
X. ERASMUS ON CLASSICAL CULTURE. From the German of Karl Von Raumer. 450
XI. MONTAIGNE ON LEARNING AND EDUCATION. By Karl Von Raumer. 461
XII. PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN SARDINIA. By Prof. V. Botta. *Concluded*. 479
XIII. CATECHISM OF METHODS OF TEACHING. *Continued*. 505
9. Geography. By Abberrode. 505
10. History. By Abberrode. 512
XIV. WOODWARD CITY HIGH SCHOOL OF CINCINNATI. 520
Illustrations. 522
XV. COOPER INSTITUTE—or Union of Art and Science—New York. 526

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5